

# The Library Assistant :

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## EDITORIAL.

The thoughts of most people, even of such sedate, prosy, book-worms as librarians are inevitably turning towards Christmas. We shall soon be exchanging with each other the time-honoured greetings; and, for a day or two at least, forgetting the ever entangling fascination of books in partaking of the joys of the season. But since this is the last number of the Journal to be published in 1909, the eventful year of weather, budget controversy, registration, aeroplanes, and other eventualities at home and abroad, it is a fitting opportunity to review the year from the point of view of the Association and of the Library profession at large.

The work of the Association has been highly satisfactory. The latter half of last session saw some very interesting meetings and finished with a most successful one at Croydon. The present session has commenced in the auspicious circumstances of an inspiring address by the Principal of London University, and already some successful meetings have been held. The work of the Branches has been equally successful.

But it is to the larger work that one instinctively turns in reviewing the work of the year: to the influence of the Association upon Library policy in general, rather than to the Meetings, which are all more or less fully recorded in these pages.

To take first the question of Registration which has been so prominent in the last two years: it is satisfactory to find that a scheme has been brought into being and

matured, because the need for such a course was abundantly evident. To our Association is due the credit for bringing the subject, hitherto one of academic discussion, into the field of practical politics.

We now learn that the Library Association scheme has received the approval and seal of the Privy Council.

Objections have been raised to the scheme, particularly by our Association; but it may be said that any scheme of registration would be liable to objections from some points of view. It is hoped that the objections will become lessened as time goes on.

In any case librarians have received the standing of a professional body with a definitely outlined policy of registration by qualification. Much has been said within recent years as to the evil of placing in charge of our libraries men who have no training or qualifications of any sort. This evil must disappear in course of time as professional training becomes more widely recognised, and now that there is a means of clearly indicating these qualifications.

In considering our own position as library assistants, we still find that it is not the most comfortable that one can conceive. With strictly limited funds libraries are endeavouring to do an enormous amount of work which necessarily entails grave inconveniences, to state the case only mildly. They still have to be worked with a minimum of staff at a minimum of salary, and it means long hours of work with little reward. That we are content to go on is evidence of a belief in the value of the work that we are doing, of a knowledge that the work is becoming more and more recognised and also of a deep interest in our work, which in its very nature has a fascination for the least enthusiastic among us. The Libraries Bill from which so much is hoped, still remains in abeyance, and there is need for great effort to assist its passage into law and so to secure an increase in the scope of library work.

During the year that is passed many developments have taken place showing increasing interest in the work of libraries. We have recently received newspapers from Sunderland giving enthusiastic accounts of the opening of branch libraries there towards the invaluable system of libraries that will be completed with the extension of the Central Library building. The new Fulham library has been opened; and in other parts of the country new libraries and branches are being built. Interest in other directions is illustrated by the beautiful frescoes painted in the Plumstead library by Messrs. Wilfred Walter, Bernard Adeney and others, the gift of this group of artists to the Borough of Woolwich. Everything tends to make libraries of more use to the community and to hasten on the day in

which they will become centres of learning, each a small university in all places where they are to be found.

All this progress affects us as assistants. It is only by making ourselves thoroughly acquainted with forward movements and all that is taking place in our world that we can hope to obtain the best results; and in our meetings together is to be found the very best means to that end. The more assistants that we can gather together in our Association, the greater will be our power for forwarding our own interests and the more will the ideals that we hold be strengthened.

It is hoped that a large increase of membership will be brought about shortly by the establishment of new branches; and we hope that before long every corner of Great Britain will be fully represented. We are glad to learn by a report recently received from its Secretary, that the Glasgow Libraries' Guild is flourishing, and we wish that the members could see their way to becoming affiliated with the Library Assistants' Association, as has been done by other local societies with advantages to themselves, not the least of which is that of having their proceedings recorded in this Journal.

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### ACTIVITIES IN BIBLIOGRAPHY.\*

By R. A. PEDDIE, *Librarian, St. Bride Foundation Technical Library.*

I desire to put before you a few points with reference to bibliographies from the larger point of view. I have been told that my views are of a utopian nature. Personally, I do not think my ideals go very far beyond the realm of the practical. I am prompted by the pressing need for something to be done in the direction of a unification of bibliographical activities. Bibliography to-day is divided into two camps: the dilettante and the practical. I am not interested in the dilettante side of the question; this is probably more ornamental than useful. Dealing with the practical side, we have the problems: Given the total issues of printed matter since 1450, to find: (a) Works, and editions of works by any particular author. (b) Works on a certain subject. (c) Works published in a certain country. (d) Works published during a certain period. Now, (a) is dealt with by the use of library catalogues, or universal bibliographies. (b) By

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\* The substance of an Address before the Library Assistants' Association at the Borough Reference Library, Stepney, on the 10th November, 1909.

subject bibliographies. (c) By national bibliographies. (d) Special bibliographies limited to time. As to the value of existing tools in these sections. (a) The British Museum Catalogue, and the Bibliothèque Nationale Catalogue, together with the Universal Catalogue of the Brussels Institut, are a long step towards the accomplishment of this work. (b) Subject bibliographies are innumerable. There are, in fact, too many and they overlap each other. The two page reference list has been elevated to the position of a bibliography by the attempts to register *all* bibliographies, and the really valuable bibliography of the subject is not indicated. (c) As to national bibliographies. Here we are faced with numbers of bibliographies of national bibliographies, and it is almost impossible to see the wood for the trees. No select list showing the real bibliographies as opposed to mere trade catalogues, can be obtained. (d) The early period, especially the Fifteenth Century, is covered pretty well, but, in the later periods the output becomes too big to deal with, and we have to use the national bibliographies. Again, under (a) Universal catalogues: a very practical suggestion has been made, and one which I hope will mature, and that is, that a catalogue of books *not* in the British Museum, but available in other libraries, should be compiled. Furthermore, I think I can say that an attempt has already been made in that direction: and there seems every prospect of its success. Naturally such a catalogue would be of the greatest service to the research student, and every additional entry an additional help. With regard to national bibliographies, their fault is that they are not inclusive. No national bibliography includes every book published. In Russia, for instance, where every book, newspaper, or periodical has to pass the Censor, it is possible for that official to issue a catalogue which is approximately complete, but in countries with less control over the press, the solution lies with the Copyright Office. In the United States they have to some extent solved the problem, an Index of Copyright works is issued by the Library of Congress weekly. In our country we have two authorities concerned in the copyright question, the British Museum taking the book, and Stationers' Hall taking the fee, but neither issuing any record of the registrations. We want some sort of co-ordination in this matter, and it is to be hoped that at no very distant date, an official Register of Copyright entries will be published in this country. I recently read a paper to the Library Association on some recent activities in bibliographies. Mr. Joseph Walton, of Newcastle, speaking on "Practical Bibliography" before the

North-Eastern Branch, referring to my paper, mentions what he calls my praiseworthy optimism, and says that if my suggestions are put into practice they are likely to occupy the Bibliographical Committee under existing circumstances, until the coming of the Greek Kalends. He goes on to suggest a catalogue of best books, and a bibliography of bibliography. With regard to a catalogue of best books; this is probably a work which will never be done satisfactorily by a committee. It is a work which particularly requires personal effort. Of Bibliographies of Bibliographies there are already too many, mostly useless. The Bibliography of Bibliography that is to be of any use is one which will give us something more than a mere list of works. It is doubtful whether we want a complete bibliography of bibliography. Without some indication of the scope of each work, it simply means that the research student has to see every bibliography mentioned in order to find the work he requires. I had occasion recently to look up something about a rather small and very specific subject. I wanted a bibliography of the topic and found four mentioned in the most comprehensive of Bibliographies of Bibliographies. After going to the British Museum and inspecting the four, three were found to be quite useless, being mere reference lists. The last was *the* bibliography of the subject.

One of the most practical and useful suggestions for bibliographers was made recently and that was the compilation of a union catalogue of periodicals in London libraries. A committee has this under consideration and it is to be hoped that the work will be undertaken.

Speaking as I am to assistants mainly from municipal libraries, I should like to suggest to them a piece of bibliographical work which would be exceedingly valuable and for which they have more facilities than anyone else. I refer to a catalogue of the official publications of their local authority. This has been done, I believe, for certain cities in the United States, but I know of no similar list for any town or local authority in this country. These documents have great value for the sociologist and for the student of political science, and as the British Museum does not collect them, the local library has practically a monopoly of the subject.

I trust I have avoided to-night the utopian schemes which I am accused of harbouring. There are many comparatively small pieces of work in connection with these proposals, and in connection with the larger schemes which could be carried out by the members of the Library Assistants' Association.

I feel that it is necessary to say just a word in conclusion in reference to the bibliographical examination of the Library Association.

I am firmly convinced that there is too much historical study required. If the questions are to cover the whole of the history of printers, as well as printing, from the earliest to the present time, it is a very large order and becomes a test more of memory than of knowledge. It is to be hoped that in time the historical side of the bibliographical examination will be subordinated to the practical: and special credit given to those students who have contributed some piece of practical bibliography.

## PROCEEDINGS.

### NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING.

The November General Meeting was held by the kind invitation of the Librarian and Libraries Committee, at the Stepney Central Reference Library, Bancroft Road, Mile End Road, E., on Wednesday, 10th November, at 7.30 p.m. THE PRESIDENT (Mr. W. C. Berwick Sayers) presided over an attendance of upwards of fifty.

The President announced that Miss Olive E. Clarke, who had undertaken to read a paper on "The Modern Book Considered Bibliographically," was prevented by illness from so doing. He expressed the hope that her recovery would be speedy, and that the paper might be read at a later meeting. In introducing Mr. R. A. Peddie, he remarked that Mr. Peddie, as the older members would know, had been the first chairman of the Association, had been one of its staunchest supporters ever since, and had now acquired a more than British reputation in bibliographical study and research. He was sure therefore that whatever Mr. Peddie had to say would be carefully reasoned, authoritative and worthy of careful consideration.

Mr. R. A. PEDDIE (Librarian, St. Bride Foundation Technical Library) then delivered an address on "Activities in Bibliography," the substance of which appears on page .

Mr. J. D. STEWART (Islington), was pleased that Mr. Peddie took the care to separate the sheep from the goats; he would describe the dilettante bibliographer as a picturesque rather than an ornamental worker. With regard to the subject of Bibliography there are two points of view: firstly the ideal bibliographer's point of view and secondly that of the people who use bibliographies. It often happened that these were widely divergent. Mr. Peddie had been speaking a great deal on matters of fact, and had described some of the existing conditions which hamper progress in the

bibliographical world.

The Catalogue of Books not in the British Museum was something practical that he hoped would be put in hand soon, as he was quite sure it would pave the way for a complete bibliography of English literature. He agreed with Mr. Peddie that too much attention had been paid to the historical side of bibliography, and that what is wanted is not so much a complete Bibliography of Bibliography as one that would be useful from the everyday point of view. He had himself recently been doing something in the direction of assisting those who use bibliographies; he had drawn up a list of bibliographies useful to the ordinary student.

Mr. J. F. HOGG (Battersea), regretted that it was a very difficult matter to get sets of publications or even complete lists of publications issued by various Borough Councils. He thought they showed want of respect for the future historian in not keeping these. It would be an easy matter for them to supply the local library with all they issued. Of course for such a body as the London County Council to supply copies of all its publications to those libraries within the radius of its jurisdiction, would be a big, and perhaps impossible, undertaking; but it would be very interesting to know if a complete list of their documents was obtainable. He thought that the official proceedings of such a body as the late London School Board would be of great use to the historian of the future. The work one can do with the bibliography of one's own borough, was very great. He had recently been interested in the biography of a member of the Society of Friends, and, in looking through it, discovered a concise account of Battersea as it was at that time, 1850. This person had been a teacher in a school in one of the roads, the houses of which were now pulled down. Such knowledge would be of great value to the historian and there is a wide field for the bibliographer in the matter of local literature.

Mr. MOSLIN (Whitechapel) spoke of the lectures in connection with the Library Association examination in bibliography. He attended ten lectures on the subject, of which eight were historical and only two practical. He thought that the historical aspect was overdone.

Mr. H. V. HOPWOOD (Patent Office) in expressing the satisfaction he felt at listening to Mr. Peddie's address, was sure that it had yielded many ideas in the shape of practical suggestions. But to turn to ideals. An ideal toward the accomplishment of which much is being done is a catalogue of books not in the British Museum. The catalogues of local libraries will reveal many books not in the British Museum,

but there is need for some form of co-operation in the work of local librarians, otherwise work will overlap. It would be necessary from a practical point of view to be able to say exactly where books could be found.

Mr. H. R. PURNELL (Croydon) asked for a clearer definition of the dilettante bibliographer, whether the term included the historical bibliographer and further whether it would include one who became interested in an out of the way subject such as—to choose a very out of the way one—the wearing of hob-nails in boots, and collected all the titles of books and articles bearing on the subject. [Mr. PEDDIE: No, he is a specialist.] He would like to say a word in defence of the study of historical bibliography. He thought it was an excellent training towards the practical work. Referring to Mr. Moslin's remark concerning the Library Association examinations and lectures in connection with them, he said that they had altered considerably. Fully half of the lectures were now devoted to practical work and the examinations showed more proportion.

Mr. R. F. BULLEN (Bow) asked whether papers issued by Technical and Scientific Societies are included in any Technical bibliography which comprises all papers read, whether printed separately or not; to which Mr. Stewart replied that the "Year Book of Scientific and Learned Societies" published a contents list and in many cases noted whether the paper had been printed separately or not.

THE PRESIDENT in summing up the discussion said that the paper had been remarkably provocative and just of the type required for such a meeting. He thought too that the discussion had been good. He would have liked, however, some expression of opinion upon the value of select bibliographies. Valuable as was the universal bibliography it necessarily only appealed to the student who must have the entire field of literature under examination. On the other hand a select and reasoned bibliography compiled by competent librarians and not by experts would have very great value to the student to whom the universal bibliography was a trackless wilderness. Touching the question of bibliography as understood in section 2 of the Library Association examination syllabus, he thought with former speakers, that, although the very best method of learning any subject was a historical or evolutionary one, too much emphasis was placed upon the merely historical side of the subject. Only five per cent. of library assistants, and hardly any of those in public libraries would ever be brought into contact with incunabula, and speaking of his own experience in the examination his success had been due solely to mere memoris-



ing. He would point out, however, that the lectures were now along the right lines, and at least half the Course at the London School of Economics was devoted to practical bibliography.

Mr. H. R. PURNELL in moving a vote of thanks to Mr. Peddie, said he had been agreeably surprised at the interest, as treated by him, of a subject, usually inclining towards dryness, Mr. W. B. THORNE (Poplar) seconded, expressing a hope that many of the propositions suggested would materialize. There was no question as to the value of the work that Mr. Peddie had done since he had been on the Council of the Library Association. The vote of thanks was carried with acclamation. Mr. PEDDIE then replied briefly, after which the PRESIDENT moved that a cordial vote of thanks be given to Mr. A. W. Cawthorne and the Stepney Libraries Committee for their reception that evening. Assistant librarians owed Mr. Cawthorne peculiar and personal gratitude for the practical interest he took in the training and welfare of his assistants. It was the practice of the Stepney Libraries to devote some part of every week to lectures to the staff on different phases of the work, which were delivered by the chief and principal assistant librarians. This generous recognition of the claims and needs of assistants was a standing example to all other librarians, and as an Association they recognise it with gratitude. Mr. Cawthorne, too, had been a constant supporter of the Library Assistants' Association. Mr. G. E. ROEBUCK (Walthamstow) seconded, and it was carried unanimously.

Mr. CAWTHORNE in responding remarked that his staff had not the advantages of many who were present, in that they had no closing day. Hence it was a special pleasure to receive a visit from the Association, and he felt that much good had been done that evening in a real and practical direction.

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### IRISH BRANCH.

A meeting of the above association was held in the Central Library on Wednesday, November 10th, 1909, at 3.30 p.m. Mr. R. J. Gourley in the chair. A report was laid before the meeting with regard to a course of papers for the in-coming term. This was unanimously adopted.

Mr. Thos. Coulson then gave an address particularly to the junior members. At the outset he dealt with the changed conditions under which librarians were selected for their posts by committees.

The possession of the L. A. certificates being touched on, he proceeded to point out that when so many assistants were qualifying in these subjects,

the assistant who wished to show outstanding merits would have to produce evidence of his acquaintance with other subjects. Outside these professional studies, Mr. Coulson went on to say, the most useful subjects for study were languages and history. He pointed out the necessity of acquiring a knowledge of the languages of those countries which had great literatures. He also spoke of the connection of literature with history, and recommended all assistants to learn the histories of ancient Greece and Rome, together with the most important European countries from the middle ages to modern times. Mr. Coulson then proceeded to deal with the manner in which Association work could be made helpful to students: emphasising the practice in public speaking which their meetings provided. The speaker concluded by advising the younger members to begin at the end of the Library Association examination syllabus, arguing that the certificates in literature and bibliography were the certificates *de luxe*: that classification, which required a fair amount of abstract reasoning, to be intelligible, could wait until the assistant had acquired a knowledge of the elementary stages of his profession; that organisation had best only be studied when the student was familiar with Library Routine and knew what provision had to be made for in the organization of a library; and finally, that as assistants were constantly using catalogues, the best way to understand them was to know how they were compiled, in other words to study cataloguing as early as possible.

There was little time for discussion and the usual votes of thanks concluded the meeting.

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### SOUTH WALES BRANCH.

A meeting of the South Wales Branch was held on November 10th, at the Cathays Branch Library, Cardiff. The Chairman (Mr. R. G. Williams) in his opening remarks referred to the Potter-Briscoe prize, and expressed a hope that the assistants of the Branch would enter for it.

Papers were afterwards read by Mr. F. W. Smallbridge on "The work of the Lending Department," and by Mr. W. O. Padfield on "The Making of a Catalogue." Both papers were well prepared, and were followed by interesting discussions.

After the meeting the members were invited, by the Branch Committee, to partake of tea. Before dispersing, the Hon. Secretary, on behalf of the members thanked Miss Evans (Branch Librarian, Cathays) for the excellent arrangements made.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 8th, at 3.30 p.m., at the Central Library, Cardiff, when papers will be read by Miss F. Newton (Librarian-in-charge, Roath) and by Miss E. O. Davies.

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### A WORD MORE ABOUT AMERICAN LIBRARIES.

In one of our English library periodicals recently a few articles appeared purporting to give an accurate comparison of the relative expenditures and achievements of American and English libraries. Of the principle involved in writing such articles I have no more to say than that they serve no useful purpose, and may create a great deal of unnecessary ill-feeling between two friendly parts of one profession. But it is reasonable to suppose that the said articles—which themselves were better forgotten, as they do not at all represent professional opinion of American libraries over here—aroused a certain amount of interest in this country, and that as a wrong opinion has been published in the country, it is desirable for us to learn something that is true about our American brethren. This is one reason for these notes; but, there is another in the fact that the writer of these lines contributed an article on a phase of English library work to the May number of the "Journal of Education," and in it he referred to the larger incomes and the wider sphere of activity fortunately open in consequence to the American librarian. This article produced an interesting correspondence from all parts of England, and, in fact, the world. The English correspondence proved that the average Englishman has little or no knowledge of the amount of work the public libraries are doing for the community, and that the activities of the libraries are in general badly advertised. It would seem that the average English librarian thinks it undignified to advertise, and at the same time complains of the prestige of the American library whose deserved popularity is largely produced by vigorous and persistent advertising. The American correspondence convinced me that, like many English critics of American librarianship, I had still something to learn. The remarks I print are from Dr. Samuel H. Ranck, the librarian of the Grand Rapids Public Library, which, as all who keep in touch with American library literature will know, is one of the most progressive of the medium size American libraries. "Will you permit me," he says, "to call your attention to what I conceive to be one or two slight inaccuracies, so far as American libraries are

concerned? . . . . You state that the American libraries receive the product of a tax of one mill on the dollar of the assessed valuation of the property of the city. I think the reader will infer from this that one mill on the assessed valuation is the regular income in American libraries. I know of only two or three cities that have an income of one mill on the dollar, and these are small cities between five and twenty thousand in population, and one of them in particular does not use more than half of this money. The balance is turned back to the city treasury. Where there is a provision that the library shall receive a fixed income on the assessed value the rate is usually one-third of a mill, four-tenths of a mill, or one-half of a mill, although there are some exceptions to this; for instance, in this city, the rate is four-tenths of a mill, and this yields us this year, about \$33,000. In addition to this I should say, however, that in Michigan, public libraries receive certain fine moneys, which are a variable quantity, under the operation of the state constitution. Under no circumstances, however, would this raise the amount in our case to one-half a mill on the assessed valuation. The fine moneys vary from five to ten thousand dollars a year."

I replied to this very courteous communication that \$33,000 per annum and the fine moneys compared favourably with English libraries of the same size, and I compared this and the larger staff of the American library with the same things in one English library in particular. It then seemed to me that the American income and staff were twice as large as the English. The reply was even better worthy of consideration than the first letter. He writes: "It is rather a difficult thing for one to judge accurately of the work of another library unless he has seen it himself. Reports can at the best tell only a part of the story. Conditions here in America are in many respects so wholly different from what they are in other countries that it is usually difficult to understand the situation if one has not been on the ground: for example, Grand Rapids, which is a city of a little over 100,000 population, has an area of over 2,000 acres greater than Croydon. Again, the area of this city is more than two-thirds the area of the city of Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A., which has a population of 600,000. This widely scattered population has given rise to the establishment of a considerable number of branches based on area rather than on population. Many of these branches will serve a population twice as great or three times as great as the present one, with very little additional expense for administration. It has always seemed to me that the area of a city is a very important matter to be considered, in

fact, even more important than the matter of mere population.

The number of persons employed by this Library has frequently been misunderstood, and I think likely in your case also: for example, we employ a considerable number of boys who go to school on part time, working after school hours, for which they receive a certain compensation per hour. The names of those so regularly employed appear in our annual report; nevertheless they do not by any means either in work or in salary come anywhere near those who work full time, although it swells the number of names very considerably. At the time of our last annual report, for example, there were 33 persons employed on full time, including engineer and janitors.

Another point of difference between libraries in this country and Europe, and indeed this applies to nearly everything, is the difference in the purchasing power of money. While I have no personal experience in this matter I have understood from practically everyone who has been for any length of time in England or countries of the continent, that there is a very marked difference in the purchasing power of money as compared with America. As a result salaries and wages are considerably higher, though as a matter of fact the persons in reality get very little more than they do in some other countries. You might be interested to know in this connection that for several weeks we have been endeavouring to get a page who would work eight and one-half hours a day, six days in the week, at a salary of \$20 a month, the schedule fixed by the Board, but without success. We should be glad if we could get a reliable, industrious boy who has an eighth grade education for this work. It is a position that requires absolutely no skill or previous training. The trouble is that boys of this character have no difficulty in earning as large or larger wages in some of our commercial or industrial institutions."

I had also referred in the article to the story hour which obtains in many American libraries; and probably, from a misunderstanding of a saying of Miss Marie Shedlock, the well-known teacher of story-telling as it is practised in the American libraries, I had assumed that the American librarian told stories to children still in the lower classes at the schools; and I had stated, without endorsing, the prevalent English opinion that the telling of stories was a function of the teacher, and that its objects and results were purely psychological. To this Dr. Ranck replies. "You state that stories are usually told in America to children before they are of reading age. So far as my experience goes this statement of the fact is hardly exact. While there are stories

told to children who are not of the reading age, nevertheless, at least in this institution, and in most of those with which I am familiar, at least 90 per cent. of the children who come to the story hours are old enough to take books from the library, and do."

These are a few authentic facts that throw a certain light on our somewhat dim knowledge of American libraries. We cannot emphasise too much Dr. Ranck's remark that reports only show part of the work of a public library, and it is easy to analyse any library report with a view to proving that a library is a success or failure indifferently. Moreover, critics have missed the essential fact that reports are only quantitative and cannot be qualitative. I trust this brief statement will do something towards removing a few doubts, and will be an earnest to our American readers that the British librarian does not regard their work with envy, hatred and all uncharitableness, as a recent writer—who, by the way, was so sure of his case that he dared not reveal himself and chose to write without name or pseudonym!—would have them believe; but that we believe we are one profession with identical aims.

W. C. BERWICK SAYERS.

### NOTABLE PROFESSIONAL LITERATURE.

GLASGOW PUBLIC LIBRARIES. Catalogue of the Townhead District Library. lx + 496 pp. 7½ by 5¼in. 1909. Paper, fourpence; Cloth, eightpence.

So far as neatness and utility are concerned, Glasgow is giving an object-lesson to the library world by its handy series of branch library catalogues. The present volume, which includes titles of some 11,000 books, is the fifteenth of the series, and easily maintains the standard of excellence set for the previous volumes. The arrangement is alphabetical under authors, titles, and specific subjects. A classified list of the subject headings, arranged, with some modifications, according to the Dewey Decimal Classification, is given at the beginning of the book. Entries are each limited to one line, and annotations are given only where the title-page fails to indicate the character and scope of a work. Dates of publication have (except in the case of novels) been indicated where space has permitted. Contents of collected works are set out in full. The preliminary pages include notes on the Libraries, bye-laws and regulations, a list of books on the open shelves in the reading-room, and a union list of newspapers and periodicals to be found in the various reading-rooms of the Glasgow Public Libraries.

Also received:—

REPORTS. Bootle Free Library and Museum: Twenty-Second General Report, 1908-09 Brighton Public Library, Museums and Art Galleries: Annual Report, 1907-08. Brom-

ley Public Library: Thirteenth Report, 1908-09. Croydon Public Libraries: Twentieth Annual Report, 1908-09, with Ninth Annual Report of the Upper Norwood Public Library (Croydon and Lambeth). Eccles Public Library: Fourth Annual Report, 1908-09. Erith Public Library: Report, 1908-09. Jersey City, U.S., Free Public Library. Seventeenth Annual Report, 1906-07. Kendal Public Library: Seventeenth Annual Report, 1908-09. Kingston-upon-Thames Public Library, Museum, and Art Gallery: Annual Report, 1908-09. London, Battersea Public Libraries: Twenty-Second Annual Report, 1908-09. London, Harlesden Public Library (Willesden): Sixteenth Annual Report, 1908-09. London, Shoreditch Public Libraries: Eighteenth Annual Report, 1908-09. London, Westminster Public Libraries Report, 1908-09. Newark, U.S., Free Public Library: Twentieth Annual Report, 1908. Richmond Public Library: Twenty-Eighth Annual Report, 1908-09. Walthamstow Public Libraries: Annual Report, 1908-09. Waterloo-with-Seaforth Public Libraries: Eleventh Annual Report, 1908-09.

BULLETINS. Brooklyn, U.S., Public Library: Quarterly Bulletin, new ser., v. 1, no. 3, Apr., 1909. Brooklyn, U.S., Pratt Institute Free Library: Bulletin (quarterly), ser. 4, nos. 3-4, Apr.-July, 1909. Bromley Public Library: Bulletin, nos. 8-9, Feb., July, 1909. Croydon Public Libraries: The Reader's Index (bi-monthly), v. 11, nos. 3-5, May-Sept., 1909. Grand Rapids, U.S., Public Library: Bulletin (monthly), v. 5, no. 4, Apr., 1909. London, Finsbury Public Libraries: Quarterly Guide for Readers, v. 15, no. 60, Apr., 1909. London, Hampstead Public Libraries: Readers' Guide and Students' Review (quarterly), v. 2, nos. 2-3, Apr.-July, 1909. Pittsburgh, U.S., Carnegie Library: Monthly Bulletin, v. 14, nos. 2, 4-7, Feb., Apr.-July, 1909, Title-Page and Index to v. 13.

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## INDISPENSABLE.\*

Students of librarianship are under exceptional difficulties. Although a library encyclopædia has been suggested, even announced, there is at present no work covering the whole of the principles of librarianship. For instance, there is not, nor has there ever been, a really thorough book on classification; and this difficulty is visible to the thorough student in many branches of our craft. This is no disparagement of the work of those who, like Messrs. Brown, Jast, Savage, Quinn and Stewart—to name only a few—have provided professional literature; but it is still true that we have no manuals yet on classification, or cataloguing, or the minute working of open access, or upon the best methods of working with children. Much exists in the fluid state of articles in periodicals; but—these “buts” are unfortunate—the average assistant who is more than thirty miles from a large town has small chance of seeing any number of these articles. It is a curious fact that at least two-thirds of our libraries rarely buy a book on librarianship; curious, because it is the duty of a library, in its own interests, to buy *every* book on librarianship. It would be a revelation to us to learn how few libraries have sets of the two English official journals, “The Library Association Record” and “The Library Assistant,” without mentioning the indispensable “Library World,” the scholarly “Library,” or the two American periodicals, “The Library Journal” and “Public Libraries.” Yet the only expositions of many of the more important branches of our work are to be found in their pages. Then, not half of the libraries of England have a copy of the Subject or Decimal classification. And the most curious part of the matter is that “the cobbler, the baker and the candlestick maker” are readily supplied with their text-books. Are the library committees stingy or are the librarians? or are assistants so apathetic that they never make demands for these works? Here, perhaps, is a chance for co-operation in small districts. Could not the librarians meet, and each library committee be persuaded to purchase a certain number of the technical books of the profession, so that a lending library of everything is available to every library worker within a reasonable distance? Or, since Heaven generally helps only those who help themselves, the assistants in any given area should form a book-club and by a small subscription keep themselves supplied. It is an urgently-needed reform, and assistant librarians should do what they can to call attention to the need. If such sets of the periodicals and the text-books were available the value of this already valuable guide would be considerably enhanced; because not a few of its references are to them. Briefly the “Guide to Librarianship,” which is a revised and widely-extended edition of the “Annotated Syllabus for the Systematic Study of Librarianship,” 1904, consists of a series of hints on the six sections of the Library Association Examination Syllabus with selected references to authorities under each. The more important books are starred. The work does not claim omniscience or perfection, but represents what the editor considers to be the most useful literature. The preface says the “list of books and articles given is neither select nor exhaustive, but as far as is thought best, just useful.” Which is tantamount to saying that “This is not a select list but a carefully chosen one.” As a matter of fact the book is selected, and selected in general with admirable care; and the student who follows out the course indicated will be equipped in the subject read. We notice that the revisors of the

\* “Guide to Librarianship: a Series of Reading Lists, Methods of Study, and Tables of Factors and Percentages in connection with Library Economy.” By James Duff Brown. 7½in., 93 pp., cloth. Libraco. Two Shillings and Sixpence net.



list are nearly all members of our Association; so we may claim a special pride and interest in the result. A feature of the hints is the admirable introduction to classification by Mr. L. Stanley Jast; this is really the best thing of the kind ever given to librarians, and has an invaluable chronological list of systems. The selection of articles under classification wants re-arrangement. The references to logic want cutting down considerably; Bosanquet, Jevons and Mill would be ample. The entries under the Expansive are mixed up, but that is probably the fault of the printer. Under the Subject there is no reference to Sayers's "Canons of Classification" nor to any other article that criticises the system. Again, the paper which appeared in this journal on "Some Principles of Classification" is placed under "Application of Classification to Shelves"; it should be under "Principles." These are instances of the faults of the book, but they are matters of detail and we would place no more emphasis upon them than to point them out for revision in a new edition. For there must be a new edition; the book is as indispensable to students as Brown's "Manual" itself; it must be on the private shelf of every assistant, and the borrowing of such a book is a sign of ignorance of essential things in our work. The "Guide" is by no means limited to lists. It has a portentous chapter entitled "Factors and Percentages." These are to be used in working out various problems of library economy. They deal with the number of books in existence and the international and British output of books, the classes of literature stocked by libraries, the proportion of reference and lending stocks, percentages of books and periodicals, classification and cataloguing in operation, the number of existing libraries, committee methods, finance and its use, staff, training of assistants, and professional associations. These make a capital "cram-book" for the student; but they have a higher value for those who need reliable recent information. This, then, is a good book, a necessary book, and one for which all who really care for libraries will be grateful.

### THE INARTICULATE JUNIOR.

It is a common experience of all who attend our meetings, either in London or those of the Branch Associations, to notice that the discussion is confined to a few accustomed members; a letter in these pages from a lady member emphasised this point not long ago. We have in the Association several competent speakers, and we desire to hear them frequently; but we have many younger members, capable, interesting people, who might add a good deal more than they do to the discussions. The prime objection is undoubtedly nervousness. We would ask our younger brethren however, to remember that a beginning must always be made; and that the readiest speakers have been through the educative process. Our President, who is not considered a nervous man, used to cling, he tells us, to the back of a chair to prevent his knees knocking convulsively together in his first efforts. Moreover—and this is an important point—the older members can remember their own start, and are not only indulgent but also most sym-

pathetic in their hearing of younger speakers. We therefore appeal to those who preside over our meetings everywhere to encourage the associates to express themselves—to devote particular attention to this. To our junior friends we would say that the ability to speak in public is rapidly becoming a necessary qualification of the librarian, and, the sooner the start is made, the better. The art of speaking consists principally in rising boldly to one's feet and facing the Chair with as little hesitation as possible. A secondary consideration is to have something to say. As the resolution to speak needs a certain amount of summoning up, it is well for the younger speaker to look out for one point in the paper or discourse, and enlarge upon that, rather than to wander all over the paper in search of topics. Nor, when the topic is fixed upon, should the would-be speaker "worry round" it so much that he loses all pleasure in the meeting, and views his coming début as a prospective prisoner at the bar would his. Notes may be made, but they should be brief and clear; to rise and endeavour to speak and read congested notes at the same time produces no happy result. A third consideration is the language of the speech. Speak to a meeting as you would to one or two intimate colleagues, earnestly and without hesitation; oratory—if you possess that by no means perfect gift—will come later. These few thoughts we commend to the attention of all who attend our various meetings. It is a disappointment to see so few young people voicing their opinions; and we wish to see a rapid change in this direction. At the same time we do not wish it to be thought that our discussions are dull or hackneyed; that would be the reverse of true. But we would urge the associates to look up the subjects of the meeting before the meeting, and when they attend it to speak, knowing that they will receive sympathy and encouragement from their hearers, and that their severest critics will probably be themselves.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS.

### DECEMBER MEETING.

The next Meeting of the Association will be held at the Central Public Library, Hornsey, N., on **Thursday** evening, December 9th, by kind permission of the Public Libraries Committee. Light refreshments will be provided from 6.30 o'clock, and an opportunity will be afforded of viewing the various departments of the Library. As an innovation there will be a series of Short Debates on the following six phases of Library extension work; and the chair will be occupied by Alderman Kelland, M.A., Chairman of the Public Libraries Committee:—

1.—"Do Lectures forward Library Work?"

Pro: H. T. COUTTS (Islington). Con: H. G. SURETIES (Hornsey).

- 2.—“Does a Bulletin justify its Production?”  
Pro: H. R. PURNELL (Croydon). Con: W. G. CHAMBERS (Woolwich).
- 3.—“Do Exhibitions develop the Reading Habit?”  
Pro: FLORENCE R. GORING (Hackney). Con: ROSINE L. DUMENIL (Hackney).
- 4.—“Are Readings and Reading Circles Desirable?”  
Pro: W. BENSON THORNE (Poplar). Con: J. F. HOGG (Battersea).
- 5.—“Is the Story-Hour within the Librarian's Province?”  
Pro: W. C. BERWICK SAYERS (Croydon). Con: J. D. STEWART (Islington).
- 6.—“Should Libraries Advertise? and, if so, to what extent?”  
Pro: GEO. E. ROBBUCK (Walthamstow). Con: J. D. YOUNG (Greenwich).

Each opener will be allowed five minutes.

The Library is easily accessible from all parts, and may be quickly reached by booking to Hornsey from any of the following stations:—Moorgate Street, 5.40, 5.47, 5.53, 5.59, 6.18, 6.23. King's Cross, 5.40 5.53, 6.0, 6.23, 6.27, 6.28. Broad Street, 5.24, 5.33, 6.3, 6.10, 6.41. Victoria (through), 5.2, 5.23, 5.40, 6.4. Woolwich (through, change at Finsbury Park), 4.43, 5.2.

There are trains to Finsbury Park every few minutes on the Piccadilly Tube from Hammersmith and on the Great Northern and City Tube from Moorgate Street, and frequent trains run from Finsbury Park to Hornsey.

Muswell Hill Electric Trams from Finsbury Park run to Hornsey Church, which is near the Library.

**Members are warned against journeying by omnibus to Hornsey Rise, as this is some 25 minutes' walk from the Library.** The Library is situated in Tottenham Lane, Hornsey, between the Fire Station and the Police Station, and is about two minutes' walk from the station.

#### NORTH EASTERN BRANCH.

A Meeting of the North Eastern Branch of the Library Assistants' Association will be held, by kind permission of Mr. A. Hair, Chief Librarian, at the Tynemouth Public Library, North Shields, on Wednesday, December 15th, 1909.

#### PROGRAMME.

7.0 p.m. Meeting of Committee.

7.30 p.m. General Meeting:—

Minutes of last Meeting.

Member's Paper: “Prints in Public Libraries,” by

R. H. H. PORTS, Tynemouth.

Associate's Paper: “Library Exhibitions,” by

W. W. HOWE, Sunderland.

A Football Match, Assistants North of the Tyne, *versus* Assistants South of the Tyne, will probably be played, weather permitting, in the afternoon. Notification of this will be sent to members later.

#### NEW MEMBERS.

**MEMBERS:** Charles Blackmore (Stoke Newington); William Rüntz (Hackney).

**ASSOCIATES:** Miss R. E. Allchorn (Hackney); Miss G. M. Bull (Battersea); Miss D. M. Smith (Hackney).

### APPOINTMENTS AND CHANGES.

\***CORNWALL, F. W.**, Assistant, South Norwood Branch Library, has been appointed Senior Assistant, Croydon Central Lending Library.

**HETHERINGTON, LEONARD**, Sub-Librarian, Blackpool, has been appointed Librarian, Skipton Public Library.

**KETTLE, BERNARD**, Sub-Librarian, Guildhall Library, has been appointed City Librarian.

**PEACH, CUTHBERT**, Assistant, John Rylands' Library, Manchester, has been appointed Assistant Librarian, Gray's Inn Library.

**PURNELL, C. J., M.A.**, Chief Assistant to Dr. Wright in the compilation of the Subject Index of the London Library, and late of the Bodleian Library, has been appointed Sub-Librarian, London Library.

**VOCE, EDITH M.**, Junior Assistant, Waterloo-with-Seaforth Public Libraries, has been appointed a Desk Assistant, Liverpool Public Libraries.

\***YOUNG, D. S.**, Senior Assistant, East Ham Central Library, has been appointed Assistant Librarian, Chelsea.

\* Member, L.A.A.

### THE LIBRARY ASSISTANTS' ASSOCIATION.

(Founded 1895.)

**PRESIDENT:** W. C. BERWICK SAYERS, Diploma, L.A., Croydon.

A New Session commenced on 1st October, 1909.

"Everything I have heard and read of your Association is excellent."—*Sir Albert K. Rollitt, LL.D., D.C.L., Litt.D., at London University.*

Subscriptions: Fellows, 7s. 6d.; Members, 5s. 0d.; Associates, 2s. 6d. per annum.

The Association has Branches in Ireland (Belfast), the North-Eastern Counties, South Wales and Yorkshire.

Every library assistant should be a member of the Association, which is working for professional continuity and the furtherance of the professional, educational and social interests of library assistants. **It was the L.A.A. that made Registration a practical question.**

**Hon. Treasurer:** W. Geo. Chambers, Public Library, Plumstead.

Full information, forms of application, and publications may be obtained of the Hon. Secretary, Henry T. Coutts, North Library, Manor Gardens, Holloway, N.

### THE LIBRARY ASSISTANTS' ASSOCIATION SERIES.

Price Threepence each, post free.

No. 1. Some Principles of Classification. By W. C. Berwick Sayers, Classification Honours, L.A.

No. 2. Libraries in the Rural Districts. By Harry Farr, Chief Librarian, Cardiff.